

Human Events *A Weekly Analysis for the American Citizen*

Editorial Office 1323 M STREET, WASHINGTON 5, D.C. Telephone NATIONAL 2066

VOL. III, NO. 42, Issue Number 142, OCTOBER 16, 1946 ★ Editors: FELIX MORLEY & FRANK C. HANIGHEN

THE MOUNTAIN OF MISERIES

By Edna Lonigan

Addison tells the story of how Jupiter, touched by the sighs of mortals, invited them to lay down their burdens in a great open plain. The heap grew into a mountain of miseries. Only one condition was set. Everyone who left a misery had to take another away with him. The consequences were so much worse than the first state that even the god was sorry, and gave each his own troubles back again, as the easier to bear.

The political difficulties of the United Nations are real enough, but it is also faced with a mountain of "social" problems, which zealous people are heaping on it, in hope of a new miracle. The recent meeting of the Economic and Social Council, at Lake Success, had before it tasks ranging from resettlement of refugees to "full employment." Already 150 projects are before the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, scheduled to meet in Paris in November. These range from providing movie projectors for devastated areas to eliminating illiteracy throughout the world. And UNESCO is not even organized yet!

The question arises: Why heap all our miseries at the center, if we must each carry another burden away? Can difficult social issues be met better by governments through uniform official policies than by free experiment and endeavor on the part of the people themselves?

One strength of British-American society is that its citizens have traditionally asked their governments to do very little. The American people in the past did not heap their troubles at the center, but sought to grapple with each problem while it was small. Our Federal Government would have collapsed before 1800 if it had collected all the miseries of the colonists and sought uniform answers for the problems of 13 dissimilar States. Yet UN is trying to settle far more problems than the colonists had, and on a global scale.

If we ask UN to solve non-political issues we have taken a crucial political turn. We have abandoned the British-American idea of limited government, and accepted the German political philosophy that the State must be strong so that it can solve complex issues for the people.

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II

Since the Thirty Years' War, in the Seventeenth Century, German society has been organized on the principle that the State needs a strong bureaucracy of talent to deal with technical problems. This doctrine arose among the small principalities after 1648, primarily because all Germany had been ravaged in the religious wars and private energy was utterly depleted. The princes wanted to rebuild roads and reopen mines to restore their military power. Unwilling to wait for the slow growth of citizen enterprise, they gathered a body of experts to plan the solution of economic questions. This bureaucracy of talent, in the service of the sovereign power, is the Cameralist system.

Germany, long the home of the free cities, paid a high price for this "short cut." As energy revived in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries it was polarized about an official core. Society could never grow as strong as the State apparatus. So the Cameralist bureaucracy was never demobilized. It persisted under the Empire, under the Weimar Republic and under Hitler's Third Reich. Germans made many changes in the "sovereign" after 1648 but never the one vitally important decision -- to give themselves more responsibility than they gave to any "sovereign."

This solar system of organization about an official core was adopted by Peter the Great, and later by Lenin, as a quick way to bring about changes without educating the people. The elite decided. In consequence, the same Cameralist system now dominates Russia. Since 1918 it has spread among the Western nations, where it is called "liberalism"!

The Cameralist State rests on the assumption that officials have a wisdom greater than citizens. This mystical doctrine of the State is in absolute conflict with the British-American theory that officials possess only human attributes, and that government can accomplish only such limited results as are best achieved by force.

While Germany was developing the Hegelian theory of the State, the English learned to keep kings and experts strictly in their place, and to construct a modern economy themselves by trade and colonization. As a result the "elite" in English-speaking countries was never concentrated in government, but remained scattered among the people. Men of energy did not look to the State for advancement. Instead they had to win the approval of their fellow-citizens. Only thus could they secure capital, workers, or markets.

English and American leaders had no "authority." They worked with those who wanted to work with them, and had no power over the others. There was no need for uniformity and no way to get it. Out of this free

consent came the British-American network of private voluntary agencies, subject to no officials, which gave our society its richness and variety in so many fields.

The United Nations must follow the Western pattern of free organization or it must follow the Cameralist model. Do we want a strong world government or a strong world society?

III

To impose heavy social burdens on UN is to end all hope of a free world community. UN, if overloaded, can function only by creating an international elite. But no society, national or international, can have its leadership concentrated in the State, and also widely scattered among the people. No society can condition its most active men to the use of power and also condition them to leadership by voluntary means.

Its Charter does not determine whether UN will be limited government or Cameralist government. UN at present is only a legal shell. The question of what kind of world society is to grow up to fill the shell is as yet undecided. Once UN starts to build a Cameralist elite, however, the die is cast. World society will be held within a mold shaped by its officials. It will follow the rigid solar system of Germany and Russia rather than the open voluntary pattern of the West.

Australia, Holland, Belgium, are obviously trying to make UN an organ of representative government. Their efforts will be in vain if a Cameralist elite gets a bridgehead in UN's bureaus and commissions. The legal shell will have been filled before the people of the world are awake to what is happening.

Limited government and Cameralist government cannot exist together. The British discovered this in their long contest with Charles I and his able officials. The American colonists embedded the lessons of the same experience in our Constitution. Wherever government has its own body of experts, officials have the advantage of larger resources, earlier information, greater prestige and political power. Private experts enter into debate with Cameralist officials at a serious disadvantage. They can not even communicate with the public as well as officials can. No legislature can hold the balance between private citizens and officials so well endowed. Representative government must give way.

Cameralist experts serve the party in power, and bureaucracies are not nurseries for dissenting opinion. The rich social life that grew up in England and America without benefit of official approval could never come to life under Cameralism. The process is the same in the little German principalities after the Thirty Years' War and in the dictator-

ship of the proletariat in Russia after 1917. There is a gradual withering away of everything opposed to the State.

IV

What is the alternative? It is so simple that it may be lost in present-day admiration for the big and dramatic.

Where no governmental elite absorbs their funds and energy, the people form whatever associations they need. Private individuals have been building international co-operation since nations began. Business men, Labor leaders, Rotarians, Church organizations, all make bits of international machinery. Yale-in-China and the Rockefeller Foundation knit the nations together. Voluntary association is simple, because nothing is started that is not really needed. It is quiet because there are no dramatic contests for power. Where no one wields the power of the State, no one can be injured by not participating.

Most of the social problems now being laid upon UN could be solved better by private associations than by any elite. It may take longer if their expenses are not paid by taxation, but they will not have to follow the official line. There will be no bar to minority experiment.

Nations like Russia, which prefer the Cameralist system, can pick their representatives in any way they wish. If international government is limited government, it cannot interfere with truly domestic affairs.

In UNRRA we have the new Cameralist elite, with sole power over relief policies. Private agencies, which did superb work after 1918, are satellites. What have we gained? Every decision is political. Whether we give or withhold aid to Yugoslavia we have a political crisis. Decisions do not conform to any law, but are made by an international executive answerable to no one. Naturally, cost is astronomical.

All plans of the Economic and Social Council and of UNESCO call for government by experts, subject to no legislative control. Will this reduce our mountain of social miseries? Or give us greater burdens?

The Cameralist nations, by adding constantly to the powers of the State, have brought Europe to the brink of ruin. In a free society, people and nations can differ without conflict. If international government is given over to a Cameralist elite, officials will shape our institutions in uniform patterns through the use of power and German political philosophy will have triumphed.

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By Frank C. Hanighen

October 16, 1946

So that the American people might eat meat, President Truman had to eat his words. Reversing his stand of September 26, when he insisted that abandonment of price control would "add to rather than solve our difficulties," the President has now lifted what recently amounted to a ban on the marketing of meat. He gave assurances that this would solve the meat famine. It remains to be seen whether the electorate will prove grateful for a move which is so obviously an attempt to salvage votes from difficulties of his own making.

The radio address -- some call it the "Farewell Address to the New Deal" -- was a surrender speech, but it was not an Appomattox of principle. For the President did not renounce the principle of price control in peace time. On the contrary, one passage indicates how closely he came to taking ruthless measures characteristic of totalitarian dictatorships: "Some have even suggested that the Government go out onto the farms and ranges and seize the cattle for slaughter. This would indeed be a drastic remedy. But we gave it long and serious consideration. We decided against the use of this extreme wartime emergency power of Government. It would be wholly impracticable because the cattle are spread throughout all parts of the country." (Underscoring ours.)

One can only conclude from these words that an extraordinary seizure of private property by the Government was rejected because it was not practical, not because it would violate every principle of the American Constitution.

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Secretary of State Byrnes secretly dabbled in the hazardous game of appeasement just before Henry Wallace bid his hand in the now historic affair of last month. This is the story which certain "top level" elements have kept to themselves for some weeks as they uncomfortably pondered its implications. They are all the more embarrassed as they had recently become enthusiastic about Byrnes because of his "end to appeasement" speeches in Paris and Stuttgart. Their feelings, therefore, were of a rather mixed nature as they watched how Byrnes was cast in the role of unyielding exponent of the anti-appeasement policy.

This is their disturbing tale. Late in August, before Wallace's resounding Madison Square Garden speech, Byrnes threw out to Molotov a feeler of a rather surprising character. He did not, so far as we gather, definitely mention "spheres of influence," but the tentative would have been more accurately phrased if he had. Russia should recognize -- he intimated -- that the United States had the sole responsibility for the Americas and the Far East; and that Britain should have this exclusive role in the Middle East. In Europe, Britain and America should recognize exclusive Russian responsibility for Eastern Europe (i.e. what Russia now holds) and no bloc sponsored by Britain and the U. S. would be formed in Western Europe. It is not known whether Byrnes disclosed this plan to the British, or to Senators Connally and Vandenberg. But the Russians flatly rejected it.

The aforesaid elements believe that Byrnes reverted to impulses prompted by domestic political considerations. Was it not the old strategy of "bringing home a treaty -- or something -- to show the voters"? Also, they are wondering what part State Department Counsel Ben Cohen played in the inspiration for this proposal. Mr. Cohen, it is believed, has never entirely abandoned his pro-appeasement prejudices; and he was one of Mr. Byrnes' closest advisers in Paris.

Other speculations occur to any thoughtful observer. Did Wallace know of Byrnes' move before the Madison Square Garden speech? If so, the extraordinary position which he took seems more intelligible. The effect in the Kremlin of such a move on the part of Byrnes can well be imagined; and it may explain Russia's continued intransigence. But the principal question which must torment any observer is: When will we have an intelligent foreign policy, consistently followed?

* * * * *

The flight of the "Dreamboat" has turned out to be a nightmare to some military circles. This Army Superfortress, a B-29, took off from Hawaii, crossed the North Pole, traversed the Western European skies and landed in Egypt -- all with full publicity. These military circles criticize the "show" on two grounds:

(1) It was a clumsy provocation to Russia. This action will enable Russian propagandists to charge with justification that we are waging a "war of nerves."

(2) By permitting full publicity, the Army surrendered the "security" cover which any such experimental maneuver should possess. It is natural and proper that our air force should want to test long distance bombers under Arctic conditions. But why, it is asked, should we proclaim to Russia what we are doing? One military observer remarked, "If the Russians have not pushed construction of bases on their Arctic circle territory, they will now certainly give them top priority."

We could have obtained, it is pointed out, the necessary tactical and technical data by a secret flight, say from Panama to the North Pole and back to Fort Benning, with both take-off and landing on a closed-off military airport. Or, if the Air Force additionally wanted knowledge of Arctic conditions north of Europe, the landing could have been made on an Army airfield in western Germany or at the Foggia (Italy) military air base. But any such flight should have been shielded from the press, and members of the air crew sworn to secrecy. General Spaatz' communiqué on the flight is considered "a masterpiece of indiscretion."

* * * * *

The news that Henry Wallace has accepted the editorship of the New Republic, thereby ensuring himself of a rostrum, does not alter the general feeling that the ex-Secretary of Commerce faces a rather dim political future. It is not forgotten that the Communists hissed him during his speech in the Garden, and that only a week later they rallied behind him in his controversy with the President. The manipulators of Leftist thinking by no means slavishly follow Wallace; and indeed they now seem to prefer the more radical Senator Pepper.

Nor is the rest of the New Deal by any means pledged to Wallace. One prominent New Deal clique, of which Jerome Frank, Abe Fortas and Ben Cohen are leading spirits, has distrusted Wallace ever since the Rex Tugwell-George Peak fight in the early days of the New Deal. At that time, Wallace proved unreliable in their eyes by deserting Tugwell for Peak. This particular group remains faithful to its candidate for President, Supreme Court Justice Douglas. Additionally, ex-Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes is quite hostile to his former Cabinet colleague. Wallace, if he is to lead a Left movement, needs more than a journal of opinion.

The announcement by Bruce Bliven, at present acting editor of the New Republic, that the periodical will enter the "mass magazine" field raises an interesting question. If this course is followed, the New Republic will necessarily desert the intellectual field in which it has been so prominent for over 30 years. Like the Nation, it has addressed itself to a small, but highly influential, audience of less than 50,000, who consider themselves America's intelligentsia.

The influence which these two magazines have exerted on people who never see either of them is far greater than their circulations indicate. For newspaper and radio commentators, teachers, lecturers, clergymen, etc. -- in short, the "opinion

formers" -- who read these magazines "step down" their ideas to the average man in the street on a wide scale. Thus the indirect influence of these intellectual periodicals has had more effect on public opinion than those found in the hands -- but not the minds -- of millions. The "totalitarian Liberal" philosophy, thus canalized through the intelligentsia to the masses, has been a potent factor in changing popular ideas about the limits and functions of the State. Therefore, the New Republic editors seem to be exchanging a highly strategic publishing medium for the privilege of acting as mouthpiece for a political figure of uncertain future and influence.

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A Tennessee case against 25 negroes, on trial for their alleged part in a race riot, went to the jury week before last. The nation's press gave the case perhaps somewhat more space than is usual in such matters. Mr. Vincent Sheean, who covered the case, said that the Prosecuting Attorney let loose a "terrifying flood of hatred" and "sectionalism." But the jury, to the surprise of Sheean, acquitted 23 of the 25 accused.

In short, Bilbo failed to win Tennessee. We put it in that figurative way, because there seems to be a disposition in the totalitarian Liberal press to take some credit for what is indeed a triumph for sanity over racial feeling. That press, and northern politicians, materially assisted Bilbo in winning his renomination fight in Mississippi some months ago. The campaign against "The Man" was waged throughout the North so intensively and continuously in pulpit, hustings, press and radio that many Mississippi voters reacted with natural Southern resentment against "Yankee interference." We suggest that the failure to exploit the Tennessee case on any such hysterical and national scale considerably improved the atmosphere in Tennessee as well as in the jury room.

Southern liberals have made substantial gains in recent years in spreading racial toleration and understanding. Their chances of progress should increase in direct proportion to Northern tact and in inverse proportion to Northern intrusion.

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During a visit to Cuba late in September, we noted a number of news agency stories in Havana papers reporting that Russia was trying to make a deal with Franco. Then, dispatches carried a denial from the Franco Government that Madrid sought such an agreement; the text bearing a strong implication that Moscow was the petitioner. Finally Pravda denied the story, characteristically placing the blame for its origin on "American reactionaries."

For this conventional Moscow impeachment, we feel constrained to take a bow. On August 7, this column noted the Moscow-Madrid parleys. But the American press has almost completely ignored the development. One commentator, Constantine Brown, did break the silence in the Washington Evening Star (October 9) to report that "undercover negotiations were going on between the Russian and Spanish Governments which might end in a 'commercial agreement,' accompanied by a resumption of diplomatic relations." Russia, said Brown, no longer objects to Franco remaining in office and is even willing to "strengthen his hand in the event he desires to withdraw some of the political liberties which he was compelled to grant his people under pressure of public opinion in the United States and Britain." The agreement sought by Moscow, according to Brown, "might lead to Franco's being placed under Moscow's tutelage."

We doubt this possibility. But it is quite likely that Moscow's secret diplomatic effort may strengthen Franco's hand in bargaining with the Western democracies. It would be ironic if the totalitarian Power which has objected most strongly to Franco's totalitarianism should be the principal instrument in perpetuating it.

Notes and Quotes

Over-confident Republicans who already envisage a Republican political dominance for many years to come, might take heed of a melancholy prophet in their midst, former Congressman George Holden Tinkham. As interviewed by Cecil Dickson in the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle (June 6), Mr. Tinkham makes this forecast: "The Republicans should capture the House and gain several seats in the Senate, even if they do not capture the Senate, in the 1946 Congressional elections. President Truman will be defeated for re-election in 1948. The Republicans will win the 1948 Presidential election, and the new GOP President will take office just when the post-war boom starts to bust. The dangerous years ahead will begin in 1950-51 and they will be difficult for years to come. The Democratic candidate in 1952 will win the Presidential election and the Republicans will be out for many years."

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Under the title "Another 1929?" the London Economist (September 14) anticipates a test for the American economy when the "present abnormally high level of consumption expenditure" recedes. "Can the men thrown out of work -- those now directly supplying the abnormal demand -- be moved quickly enough to some other form of capital work? Or will they be left on the labor market? It would be rash to predict what the answers will be to these questions."

But the English publication believes that American fears of another crash are premature. "These things are not happening yet. There is no saturation of the demand for consumption goods yet visible; on the contrary, all the talk is of scarcities. Capital construction, though it is rising rapidly, is not yet excessive; nor has it reached fruition. Demand is still manifestly in excess of supply. It is true that the pipeline of supply is filling up and that it will soon begin to gush forth in gigantic volume. But it is very difficult to believe that, even within the six to nine months to which the Stock Exchange's prophetic vision may extend, a substantial change is likely in the present trends, which are all upward and inflationary. If there is a sharp break on Wall Street in September, 1947, it will be time to fear the worst -- but hardly yet."

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A learned subscriber in Idaho writes to praise Mr. Morley's portrait of Henry Wallace in Analysis No. 139, but thinks that some injustice was done to the Old Testament prophets. "The prophets were not primarily destroyers, but restorers, faithful to the traditions of the nation symbolized by the name of Moses. They were not inaccurate or hasty in their judgments. Much documentation could prove this; such as the cases of Elijah's opposition to Phoenician influence after Ahab's alliance, of Isaiah's opposition to an Egyptian alliance under the threat of Assyrian expansion, of Jeremiah's appease-Babylonia policy, etc. They were students of events, and usually far ahead of their contemporaries in clarity of judgment.

"The Rechabites were not Marxian in type [it was Mr. Wallace, not Mr. Morley, who drew this comparison], and communist only in the sense that Mennonites, for example, are communist. Jonadab, also Jehu and Elisha, as well as Elijah whose work they continued, were not analogous to the American Communists; their sole concern was to counteract the un-Israelite activities of Ahab and his house, whose dealings with Phoenicia had introduced Baalist tendencies which in method, if not in substance, were the real analogues to current Communist activity in America. . . . It is true that the prophets held intense convictions about the values on which their nation was founded, and that is the last point I could think of to level as a criticism against anyone in American public life . . ."

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